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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/719,934	11/21/2003	Hiroshi Abe	42530-6200	4003
21611 7590 06/27/2007 SNELL & WILMER LLP (OC) 600 ANTON BOULEVARD SUITE 1400 COSTA MESA, CA 92626			EXAMINER BEAUCHAINE, MARK J	
			ART UNIT 3653	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 06/27/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/719,934

Applicant(s)

ABE ET AL.

Examiner

Mark J. Beauchaine

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 May 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 21-23 and 34-37 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 24-28 and 31-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 29 and 30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The term "removably locking unit" (lines 1 and 2) lacks sufficient antecedent basis.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 24, 27 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patent Number US 6,656,034 B2 by Rasmussen et al ("Rasmussen") in view of Patent Number 3,662,770 by Cohen ("Cohen"). The coin dispensing apparatus disclosed by Rasmussen comprises storage hopper 12, selector unit for removing individual coins from said hopper (see column 2, lines 20-27) and coin elevator 14 for dispensing coins from said hopper. Said elevator comprises hopper side guiding unit 18

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and dispensing side guiding unit 16 that is removably attached to said hopper side guiding unit for transporting coins (see generally at 28/30) (see Figure 3). Said dispensing side guiding unit is movably attached to said hopper to provide a first dispensing and a second non-dispensing mode of operation. The alignment position of said dispensing side guiding unit is different between said two modes of operation.

Rasmussen further discloses fixing unit 22 for locking said coin elevator unit in said first mode of operation (see Figure 4). Said fixing unit includes a first member with a releasable locking unit 22a (see Figure 5) that is permanently mounted above said selector unit, and a second member that has a locking member (*i.e.*, the element shrouding aperture 22b) and is complementary to locking unit 22a. Said second member enables a releasable fastening of the dispensing side guiding unit in said second mode of operation to the top of the apparatus body. Still further, Rasmussen discloses switching member 26 for detecting when said dispensing side guide unit is in a second mode of operation and stops power to said apparatus when in said second mode of operation (see Figure 5 and column 3, lines 29-64).

Rasmussen fails to disclose a handle member. Cohen teaches a coin dispensing apparatus comprising a handle attached to the top of body 2 of the apparatus (see Figures 1 and 2) for the purpose of transporting said apparatus. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the handle/body configuration of Cohen into the apparatus of Rasmussen for the purpose of transporting said apparatus.

Claims 25, 26, 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen in view of Cohen as applied to claim 24 above, and further in view of Patent Number 4,725,027 by Bekanich ("Bekanich"). Rasmussen is silent as to the particular locking operation (*i.e.*, automatic or not automatic) of said fixing unit.

Although the protruding end of mating locking unit 22a is squared (see Figure 5), the rounded end of the mating element shrouding aperture 22b of Rasmussen implies that the locking operation of said two mating elements does not require the knob of said fixing unit 22 to be retracted by hand operation. Furthermore, Bekanich teaches a fixing unit that comprises mating elements 25 and 35 (see Figure 4) and automatically locks structural elements 16 and 17 together. Both mating elements 25 and 35 of Bekanich comprise angled flat surfaces which permit element 35 to retract against the force of compression spring 42 for the purpose of automatically locking two separate structural elements together. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the fixing unit of Bekanich into the apparatus of Rasmussen for the purpose of automatically locking two separate structural elements of the apparatus.

Claims 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen in view of Cohen as applied to claim 24 above, and further in view of Patent Number 4,943,258 by Abe ("Abe"). Rasmussen/Cohen fails to disclose a movable stopper member. Abe teaches a coin dispensing apparatus comprising housing member 21 containing movable stopper member 20 for securing coins guiding

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unit 6 for the purpose of preventing coins from returning downward along said guiding unit when said apparatus is not in operation. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the stopping member of Abe into the apparatus of Rasmussen/Cohen for the purpose of preventing coins from returning downward along said guiding unit when said apparatus is not in operation.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 21-23 and 34-37 are allowed. Claims 29, 30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 24-33 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark J. Beauchaine whose telephone number is (571)272-6934. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM through 5:00PM Mondays through Thursdays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick H. Mackey can be reached on (571)272-6916. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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